

**Thomas Jefferson to Edmond C. Genet, June 29,  
1793, with Protests and Affidavits , from The Works of  
Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition.  
Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.**

**TO THE FRENCH MINISTER (EDMOND CHARLES GENET)**

Philadelphia, June 29, 1793.

Sir, —The persons who reclaimed the ship *William* as taken within the limits of the protection of the United States, having thought proper to carry their claim first into the courts of admiralty, there is no power in this country which could take the vessel out of the custody of that court, till it should decide, itself, whether it had jurisdiction or not of the cause; having now decided that it has not jurisdiction, the same complaint is lodged with the Executive.

I have the honor to enclose you the testimony whereon the complaint is founded. Should this satisfy you that it is just, you will be so good as to give orders to the consul of France at this port, to take the vessel into his custody and deliver her to the owners. Should it be over-weighed in your judgment, by any contradictory evidence, which you have, or may acquire, I will ask the favor of a communication of that evidence, and that the consul retain the vessel in his custody until the Executive of the United States shall consider and decide finally on the subject.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the same day Jefferson again wrote:

“ Sir,—A complaint is lodged with the Executive of the United States, that the *Sans Culottes*, an armed privateer of France, did, on the 8th of May last, capture the brigantine

## Library of Congress

*Fanny*, within the limits of the protection of the United States, and sent the said brig as a prize into this port, where she is now lying.

“I have the honor to enclose you the testimony whereon the complaint is founded. Should this satisfy you that it is just, you will be so good as to give orders to the consul of France at this port, to take the vessel into his custody, and deliver her to the owners. Should it be over-weighed, in your judgment, by any contradictory evidence which you have, or may acquire, I will ask a favor of a communication of that evidence, and that the consul retain the vessel in his custody, until the Executive of the United States shall consider and decide finally on the subject.”